



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Release

6-28

Date

06/05/2012

Subject

California State Office
6840.06 -- Special Status Plant Management

1. Explanation of Materials Transmitted: This release transmits a complete revision of California State Office Manual 6840.06, the Special Status Plant Management Manual Supplement for California BLM. This manual supplements BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species Management, and provides policy for the management of special status plants on BLM lands managed by the BLM California State Office. This manual complements California State Office Manual Handbook H-6840-1.
2. Reports Required: None.
3. Materials Superseded: Manual pages superseded by this release are listed under "REMOVE" below. No other directives are superseded.
4. Filing Instructions: File as directed below.

REMOVE

All of 6840.06 (Rel. 6-24)

(Total: 6 pages)

INSERT

6840.06

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State Director

6840.06 - SPECIAL STATUS PLANT MANAGEMENT

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.01 Purpose.

The purpose of this Manual Supplement is to provide policy and guidance specific to the conservation of Special Status Plants and the habitats on which they depend. Special Status Plants are plant species that are officially listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as threatened or endangered (T/E) by the Secretary of the Interior under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and those designated by the California State Director as sensitive. Conservation in this Manual Supplement and pursuant to the ESA means the use of all methods and procedures necessary to bring Federally listed plant species and their habitats to the point at which the provisions of the ESA are not necessary, or to ensure there are no longer any threats to the continued existence of sensitive plant species.

.02 Objectives.

The objectives are:

A. To conserve T/E plants and the ecosystems on which they depend and to the extent possible recover these species so that ESA protection is no longer needed.

B. To ensure that actions authorized on BLM administered lands do not contribute to the need to list any sensitive plant species under the provisions of the ESA and to initiate proactive conservation measures that reduce or eliminate threats to BLM sensitive plant species to minimize their need for listing under the ESA.

.03 Authority.

(See BLM Manual 6840)

.04 Responsibility.

(See BLM Manual 6840)

.05 Reference.

(See BLM Manual 6840)

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.06 Policy.

The policy of BLM-California is as follows:

A. Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Plant Species. Federally listed threatened and endangered plant species are treated as special status species. See BLM Manual 6840 for the policy on the management of these species. In addition to the management prescribed in BLM Manual 6840, California-BLM will:

1. Include Federally listed plant species as priority species in land use plans (BLM Manual 1601, Land Use Planning, and BLM Manual Handbook 1601, Land Use Planning Handbook).

2. Develop and implement rangewide and/or site-specific management plans for Federally listed plant species that include site-specific habitat and population management objectives designed for recovery, as well as the management strategies necessary to meet those objectives.

3. Ensure that BLM activities affecting the habitat of Federally listed plant species are carried out in a manner consistent with the objectives for managing those species.

4. Develop site-specific management objectives for each occurrence of listed threatened and endangered plant species on BLM lands and/or that will be affected by BLM actions.

- a. These site-specific management objectives can be part of Resource Management Plans, rangewide or site-specific management plans, or activity plans developed for other resources.

- b. Until site-specific management objectives are prepared for each Federally listed plant occurrence, the default management objective for each occurrence will be to maintain or improve the species and its habitat at each occurrence.

5. Monitor populations and habitats of Federally listed plant species to determine whether management objectives are being met.

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B. Plant Species Proposed for Federal Listing. Plant species proposed for Federal listing are treated as special status plant species. See BLM Manual 6840 for the policy on the management of these species. In addition to the management prescribed in BLM Manual 6840, California-BLM will:

1. Include Federally proposed plant species as priority species in land use plans (BLM Manual 1601, Land Use Planning, and BLM Manual Handbook 1601, Land Use Planning Handbook).
2. Develop and implement rangewide and/or site-specific management plans for Federally proposed plant species that include site-specific habitat and population management objectives designed for recovery, as well as the management strategies necessary to meet those objectives.
3. Ensure that BLM activities affecting the habitat of Federally proposed plant species are carried out in a manner consistent with the objectives for managing those species.
4. Develop site-specific management objectives for each occurrence of proposed threatened and endangered plant species on BLM lands and/or that will be affected by BLM actions.
 - a. These site-specific management objectives can be part of Resource Management Plans, rangewide or site-specific management plans, or activity plans developed for other resources.
 - b. Until site-specific management objectives are prepared for each Federally proposed plant occurrence, the default management objective for each occurrence will be to maintain or improve the species and its habitat at each occurrence.

C. Sensitive Plant Species. The California State Director may designate sensitive species that are then treated as special status species.

1. The following plant species are sensitive species in California:
 - a. Species that are candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act.
 - b. Species that have been delisted from the Federal list of endangered and threatened species for the five years following delisting.

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c. Unless specifically excluded by the State Director, all plants listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by the State of California.

d. Unless specifically excluded by the State Director, all plants with a California Rare Plant Rank of 1B (Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere) on the Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List maintained by the California Department of Fish and Game (<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/pdfs/SPPlants.pdf>) that are on BLM lands or affected by BLM actions and that are not already special status plants by virtue of being Federally listed or proposed.

e. Other plant species not in categories 1-3 above, that the State Director designates as sensitive.

2. Management of Sensitive Plant Species. The BLM will carry out management, consistent with the principles of multiple use, for the conservation of sensitive plant species and their habitats and will ensure that actions authorized, funded, or carried out do not contribute to the need to list any of these species as T/E. Specifically, BLM-California will:

a. Determine the distribution, abundance, reasons for current status, and habitat needs for sensitive plant species occurring on lands administered by the BLM and evaluate the significance of BLM lands or actions in maintaining those species.

b. For those plant species where BLM lands or actions have a significant effect on their status, manage the habitat to conserve the species by:

1). Including sensitive plant species as priority species in land use plans (BLM Manual 1601, Land Use Planning, and BLM Manual Handbook 1601, Land Use Planning Handbook).

2). Developing and implementing rangewide and/or site-specific management plans for sensitive plant species that include specific habitat and population management objectives designed for recovery, as well as the management strategies necessary to meet those objectives.

3). Ensuring that BLM activities affecting the habitat of sensitive plant species are carried out in a manner consistent with the objectives for managing those species.

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4). Developing site-specific management objectives for each occurrence of sensitive plant species on BLM lands and/or that will be affected by BLM actions.

a). These site-specific management objectives can be part of Resource Management Plans, rangewide or site-specific management plans, or activity plans developed for other resources.

b). Until site-specific management objectives are prepared for each sensitive plant occurrence, the default management objective for each occurrence will be to maintain or improve the species and its habitat at each occurrence.

5). Monitoring populations and habitats of sensitive plant species to determine whether management objectives are being met.

c). Prepare biological evaluations that assess the effects of proposed actions that may adversely affect sensitive plant species. These evaluations can be stand-alone documents or integrated into environmental documents prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

1). To the extent possible, modify proposed actions to avoid adverse impacts to sensitive plant species.

2). Where avoidance is not possible, develop measures to mitigate impacts to sensitive plant species.

3). In conducting inventories as part of the NEPA process, survey not only for Special Status Plant Species, but for plant species with Ranks 2 and 4 on the most recent version of the California Department of Fish and Game's *Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List*. This meets BLM's obligations under the ongoing Memorandum of Understanding with the California Department of Fish and Game to collect information on plants for inclusion in the California Natural Diversity Data Base.

4). Provide the results of inventory efforts to the California Natural Diversity Data Base.

d). Take no action that adversely affects a sensitive plant species without the approval of the State Director. Approval of such an action shall be contingent upon the State Director's judgment that the evidence in the biological evaluation or environmental document is sufficient to ensure that the action will not result in the need to list the species in question as

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threatened or endangered or result in the failure to meet management objectives that have been established for the species in management plans (including resource management plans, sensitive species management plans, or other activity level plans).

- e. Follow the procedures elaborated in BLM California Manual Handbook 6840-1.